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THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS



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THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS

And other Poems

By
HARROLD JOHNSON

Author of "The Road-Makers"

LONDON: DAVID NUTT

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THE present volume is the second of a series (of which *The Road-Makers*, published in 1903, is the first) which the author hopes to complete in two succeeding volumes, *The Wayfarers* and *The Voyagers*, now in course of preparation. The title in each case is intended to apply not only to the particular poem bearing the same, but to convey the main *motif* which has largely determined the nature of the volume as a whole.

[Many of these verses have appeared in the *Daily News*, and the thanks of the author are due to Mr. A. G. Gardiner, its editor, for offering him the publicity the daily press affords, and to the proprietors of that journal for permission to re-publish.]

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To
My Mother.

FORE-WORDS

“For nineteen centuries Christendom has been busy in bridging the way to the Kingdom of God on the other side of the River of Death, but at the end of these nineteen centuries there is only here and there a soul who really believes in the possibility of a Kingdom of God on earth, now and here, and applies himself to the making of the necessary bridges that are to sustain its traffic. The higher commerce of the spiritual as well as of the industrial world is not a down-stream nor yet an up-stream, but an across-the-stream commerce. The distinction between barbarism and civilization is a thing of bridges. The barbarian goes where he likes, and does what he pleases. His action is a thing of currents and winds. He floats with the tide, whereas the civilized man crosses the streams, defies the tides, and sails against the winds. Down-stream morality is barbarism or leads to it. Up-stream morality is asceticism. Cross-stream morality is civilization. The first leads either to brutality or imbecility, the second to stolidity or isolation, the third to social service and to brotherhood. This highest traffic, spiritual as material, is dependent upon bridges, and he who is most successful in creating these structures, is the Pontifex Maximus, the Master Bridge-Builder.”

JENKIN LLOYD JONES.

" A NOISELESS patient spider
I mark'd where on a little promontory it stood isolated,
Mark'd how to explore the vacant vast surrounding
It launch'd forth filament, filament, filament, out of
itself,
Ever unreeling them, ever tirelessly speeding them.

And you, O my soul, where you stand,
Surrounded, detached, in measureless oceans of space,
Ceaselessly musing, venturing, throwing, seeking the
spheres to connect them,
Till the bridge you will need be form'd, till the ductile
anchor hold,
Till the gossamer thread you fling catch somewhere,
O my soul."

WALT WHITMAN.

I

The hours I spent apart with my own soul
Were the great hours for me ;
I have not written out one single scroll
Of that high ministry.

But, haply, here and there, a bridge I build
For the wayfaring mind ;
And though I have not wrought it as I willed,
Nor as I once designed :

Yet, in a world of men, I too a man,
Linked with the flow of things,
Drave deep the piles and dauntless stretched my span
Athwart life's buffetings.

The bridge will hold—I proved it—strain on strain
Above the Pit of Hell :
Bridge ye beyond my span of heart and brain,
And prove before ye tell.

II

Some on the current drift along,
Nor heed the whelming sea ;
Some with the current battle strong
That flows relentlessly.

Some build a bridge from land to land
For traffic to and fro :
The piles on granite strata stand
The flood-scoured bed below.

THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS

THE BRIDGE-BUILDERS

WE bridge the gorge and the cataract,
And tunnel the mountain through ;
We steer our course by the stars above
Over the trackless blue ;
We harness the lightnings for our steeds,
But leash not the hounds of the storms ;
We are little lower than all the gods,
And little higher than worms.

We store up the heat that reneweth its force
Where electrons whirl to and fro,
But we know not whence in the dark we came,
Nor where in the dark we go ;
And the words of the furthest reach of our souls
Are as gossamer threads in the sun
Which the wind that bloweth whence no man knows
Scattereth, every one.

We lift the waters over the earth,
And under their broad beds fly ;
We send forth rays of a subtler sense
Than the seeing of the eye ;

And charms we have that can deaden pain,
And we weigh and measure the star :
Fearfully, wondrously, are we made,
Nor less than the great gods are.

But a tremor moves in the heart of the earth,
And the swift globe tosses her crest,
Mate of a myriad whirling orbs,
Ordered and never at rest ;
And the cities we build in our pride of power
Are shattered, and are no more
Than the sand the hurricane dashes up
Over a waste of shore.

Wrapped in the Silence and Dark we lay
Ere the nebula was stirred,
Ere the ether throbbed in the atom's heart
At the fiat of the Word ;
Ere the rocks were molten with fervent heat
For the crystal's glory of form :
Into the Silence and Dark we go,
Out of the stress and the storm.

Sons of gods and of radiobes,
Born of the fire and the dew,
Bound by ancestral bonds of sense,
Urged to the life that is new ;

Kinsmen of mammal and reptile and worm,
With filaments out of the clay,
Heirs of unsatisfied desires,
We live our little day.

We build a shadowy Bridge of Time
Over Eternity,
We pen a fugitive word or two
On the page of Immensity ;
But we live and love with a deathless love,
And we die for the Good and the True,
And we laugh at Time with its fleeting worth
As only gods can do.

PONTIFEX MAXIMUS

THE bridges that bore the feet
Of the men of long ago,
With the post-boy and the chaise
And the old wain they must go ;
For mightier girders need
The engine and steam-plough,
And gorge and torrent span
The great bridge-builders now.

The bridges that bore the freight
Of the souls of long ago,
With the idols and false gods
And the dead faiths they must go ;
But who shall bridge across
The vast of the cosmic span,
And drive the piles below
The scour of the soul of man ?

BRIDGING NIAGARA

To ford across strong currents,
To bridge torrents and ravines,
To bear the world-freight
Safe to the other side !

Aloft a kite,
With tense and slender string ;
Then, loosed and dropped
Beyond the swirling foam ;
To the string a rope,
To the rope a cable,
To the cable a chain,
To the chain a delicate basketry of strands of steel ;
Last, enduring through ages,
Riveted, girded, sure,
For trains trans-continental,
Above the torrent,
Athwart a belt of sky,
A bridge, with lines of beauty,
To bear the freight of men.

Buffeted by the winds,
A kite, with slender string !
Yet linked with a thread so fine
The traffic of the world !

ECCE HOMO !

A FRAGMENT FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST

ECCE HOMO !

A FRAGMENT FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST

FORE-WORD

LET it be clearly understood that there is no warranty whatsoever in the New Testament for any suggestion of love, as between a man and a maid, of Jesus for Mary. We read :—" Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister, and Lazarus."

Jesus symbolizes that highest spiritual love which is independent of sex and kinship, and I would do nothing to lessen in the mind of any the sacredness of this symbol.

I hold, too, that we owe it to the holy claims of truth and of the historic sense not to imagine without the data that history supplies. If, for once, I have transgressed, I have done so not without reason (perhaps in order to offset somewhat, in this connexion, the piles of accumulated human error from the past that have well-nigh overwhelmed us), but rather in order to call attention to that frank humanity of Jesus to establish which we have in the New Testament data enough.

Further, I would convey that love, as between a man and a maid (whether experienced by him or

not), would not dishonour, but honour, even Jesus of Nazareth. Indeed, had he not at some time or other experienced such love, there would have been something lacking in his humanity. Also, it will readily be seen from the poem that there is no thought on the part of Jesus of yielding to such influence. His divine work needed his whole consecration.

It is interesting to note that no temptation of this particular kind, intervening between Jesus and his life-work, is embodied in the allegory of the Temptation. The Buddha leaves his beloved wife, Yathodaya, asleep with her first-born whom he has not seen. "To see him," he said, "I must remove the hand of the mother, and she may awake; and if she awake, how shall I depart?" How human! How pathetic! Jesus, on the other hand, leaves his mother without a pang, so far as the Gospel records witness. A sword pierces through her very soul, and in his sufferings would no suffering for her who suffered for him have part; would not such suffering borne by him be bitterer even than the cruel Cross? But the Gospels are silent.

The further question remains. Did not the Evangelists, in making such large claims for their master, omit many details which might seem to them to derogate from that claim? In any case it is well to remember that the biography of Jesus that has come down to us is not a complete biography.

Have I transgressed in adding two human touches which are not alien from the spirit of the whole?

ECCE HOMO !

A FRAGMENT FROM THE LIFE OF CHRIST.

SCENE. *Bethany. In the House of Simon.*TIME. *A few days before the Crucifixion.*

JESUS (*alone*). Sad, tender thoughts of home and
Galilee

And childhood's innocent delights steal o'er me,
When like the lilies of the field I grew,
Or like the birds, a child in Heaven's Kingdom ;
Or ever the gates of Eden were unlocked
And I knew good and ill, and Cherubim
With flame of sword guarded the Tree of Life ;
Or ever the ground was cursed. I, happy then,
Knew not the fret of thought. All loved me. Softly
Sweet influences of earth and sea and sky
Caressed me. Life was joy. This is long since.
My Father needed me : . He will uphold me.
And yet, how oft I wished I rather were
A carpenter in simple Nazareth,
And wooed and won some Galilean maid,
And knew the lisp of children and the fondling
Upon the knees ! But this is past ! How strangely
These thoughts, which I have long since thrust from
me,

Come to me still with Mary at my feet,
 Her eyes alight with love. Alas, poor Mary !
 She hearkens me as though my words dropped music
 Within a shrine, and she the worshipper.

Here all is peace and redolent of home
 After the jangle and the jar of Scribes
 And sordid barter in the Temple Courts.
 —Yea, how I lashed them !—Pardon me, my Father,
 I thought they wounded Thee !—Here all is peace.
 He brings me to the haven where I would be.

(*Enter MARY.*)

Come hither, child, my Mary. Thou art welcome.
 Thy face has quietude. I am very weary.

MARY. Is all well, master ?

JESUS. Nay, not all, my child.
 There ! Rest thy head ! Thy hair is very fair.
 Nay, for they vexed me much and words outran me.
 I called them hypocrites and vipers.

MARY. Master !

JESUS. Yea, and I lashed the changers from the
 Temple
 When my tongue failed me.

MARY. Master !

JESUS. And I fear me
 Palms will be stones ere long.

MARY. My master, master !

JESUS. Not so, my child. Be brave and yet more
 brave.

I go unto my Father and thy Father,

Unto my God and thy God. Be not troubled.
 Even now, whispers of some far country float
 To me, whispers I may not tell—I scarce
 May hear them. Another sense awakens, trembling
 With expectation. Weep not, for thou too
 Shalt hear the whispers. List ! A little while !
 We have had happy hours, my Mary. Store
 Thy memory with joy. I go away.

MARY. Nay, master, stay ! I need thee. What is
 life

Without thee ? Where is hope, and the new dawns
 Of love and peace and joy ? The frail bark shatters
 Against the rocks without the helmsman.

JESUS. Hast thou

Not God, my child ? I go that I may send
 The Comforter unto thee. He abides
 For ever. If I stay, He will not come.
 When He is near, all partings lose their sting ;
 The mother weeps not—" Son, thou'rt in God's
 hands ! "

There are bright shores where hapless lovers meet,
 Where hope knows blighting canker never-more,
 And breaking hearts grow whole in love's soft balm ;
 Death has a halo-light about his head,
 And vanished presences are with us still,
 But lovelier. I will pray unto our Father,
 And He shall send another Comforter.

MARY. But the hand, master, for I stumble oft !
 Something to touch, master, something to hear !
 Thou call'st me, child. I am a little child,

And need the touch of hand and sheltering arms ;
I am a nestling, strong alone in fears,
And dare not leave the nest.

JESUS. Nestle closer, child.
Soon thou shalt fly and He will guide thee. Trust
Him like the bird.

MARY. I would I might die with thee !

JESUS. Cease, cease ! That is His care alone.
He knows.

Good Martha needs thee. Raise the common lot
To honour. Clothe the lowliest things with grace.
Home may be holy ground where unawares
Angels may minister. Behold the Presence
Of God is everywhere. Know thou art robed
In love as the moon bathes the earth in light.
Ah, life is very beautiful, my Mary !

Therefore be glad to live. When I am gone,
God is not less, nor blooms the purple lily
Less fair. Remain the wonder of the sundown,
The flight of birds, and link of loving arms,
The innocent look of babes and mother-love,
The holy trembling passion of a kiss—
All exquisite touches on the robe of God.

I have loved the sun and trees and flowers and children
Playing, the hills, the sea in calm and storm ;
Greatly I have enjoyed the zest of struggle
And boon of peace, ever with love shot through them :
The milk and honey flowing in the land,
And juice of the vine in many a jocund cup,
Have oft made glad my heart.

MARY. I am glad that thou
Art glad. Even thou art sad at times. Thy burden
Is not at all times light, nor thy yoke easy.

JESUS. True, I have suffered. For the goal of life
Is neither joy nor woe ; but life, more life.

I have fathomed the deeps of grief, and touched
The extremest verge of pain : and ofttimes all
Was dark. I might not understand it then,

And many an agonizing cry—Why ? Why ?—

Pierced to the very Heart of God. We are

But thoughts of God unrealized as yet,

Gleams only of what shall be. We will wait

For the full splendour certain as the dawn.

Whate'er befalls is finger-post to God :

This way points sorrow, and that way points joy,

And both point Godward ; byways and highways,

All in God's country. Some rough roads, some smooth.

Abram waxed strong on Canaan's rugged heights ;

Lot rotted in the plain well-watered like

The Garden of the Lord. The skilful workman

Fits to the grain his tool. But hear me now !—

Behold the lilies, child, and dwell with beauty.

Say—" Let there be light ! "—and there shall be light.

Surely all things He makes are very good !

Be pure, and thou shalt see God. Think no evil.

Safeguard thy mind, thy Being's sanctuary ;

Let no unclean thing touch it. For the world

Is beautiful alone with thy mind's beauty.

But, look, the Mount is lit with burning gold !

Stern work awaits the morrow. Leave me now.
Sleep tranquilly, and may good angels guard
Around thee. Bring a smile at morn. Thy morn's
Glad sunshine cheers and tunes me for the day.
Farewell. God bless thee child !

MARY.

God bless thee, master !

(Exit MARY.)

JESUS (*alone*). I thought not thus to die : life is
so fair.

My tendrils cling to earth while I mount upward.
I still would wreath and circle those I love,
And ward from harm Mary, and mother mine,
And Peter's heart of passion, James and John,
And all my wandering flock unshepherded :
As if some influence, scarcely perceived
But ever present, wafted gentle peace.
Ah, mother of the sad heart and sad thoughts !
'Tis mothers suffer most. They fold us in
Their arms, our very helplessness a claim
To love ; and when we walk alone they feel
The first faint tremor of a pang ; and when
We think alone and act alone—ah, then
The tearing of the roots of life ! And when
The yearnings came to me she could not share,
She wept ; she held me strange, beside myself.
I sorrowed and I suffered, could not tell
My lone thoughts to her. She had lost a child,
And I was motherless. Now she did chide me,
And now caressed me ; wooed me like a lover
To thoughts of home and gentle comradeship.

Alas, the wistful look of those sad eyes,
So eloquent of hungering need ! And now !
—I ever did my Father's will, and ever
That will accomplished gave me joy ; but she
No other mission had than loving me.
She said : When he is grown a man, my boy
Will comfort me, nor let my grey hairs go
With sorrow to the grave.—And now bereft !
Dost Thou do well, Father, dost Thou do well ?
I think a sword will pierce through her own soul !
If possible let this cup pass from me :
Nevertheless Thy will not mine be done ! (JESUS
prays.)

PRELUDES



THE STORM-WIND

A STORM-WIND shook the land and sea :

Miserere Domine !

Night came with stars, and all was still
Over the sea and on the hill.

The light-leaved aspen softly stirred,
The poplar's tremulous branches heard
A far-faint whisper of the breeze :—
They hear more than the other trees.

Now life tumultuously pours
Her largesse over seas and shores ;
Death comes, and all is very still
Over the sea and on the hill.

Perchance to finer sense abide
Some murmurings of time and tide,
And from that bourn where all men go
The Word is whispered—very low !

SHADOWS

OVER the meadow shadows creep,
Shadows dapple the woodland lorn ;
Sportive rolling shadows sweep
Over the corn.

Shadows lie in the still moonlight,
Delicate witchery of trees ;
Fugitive shadows in soft daylight
Flit as they please.

Up the hill and over the dale
Cloudland shadows billow and flow ;
Wistful shadows at twilight pale
Sombre and go.

After quiver of set of sun
When the last gleam has shot through the skies,
When tints of maroon on high clouds grow dun
Ere the moon rise :

Melt the shadows into the gloom,
Into the drowsy land of rest,
Or on the mountains hover and loom
Into the west.

Echoes of voices, shadows of dreams,
 Whither ye call fain would I go !
Is there a land of sunlit streams
 Where no shadows flow ?

Where white-robed Beauty is Maid of Light
 Undappled of shadow, and no rains fall ;
Where cloudland and dreamland are banished quite,
 And Love is all ?

NOCTURNES

I

A SADNESS that I cannot speak,
Half-sweet, and cherished apart !
I think it is the long twilight
Has sunk into my heart :

The vagueness and the merge of things,
The peace ineffably alone,
The wistfulness that still must use
A language of its own.

The elms that top the mowing-grass
And the dark clouds are one ;
But I am reft of comradeship
At setting of the sun.

I think a deeper Being blends
Me and the cloud and tree ;
And lacking the calm sense of this
Is all my misery.

II

IN the Land of Setting Sun,
When the toil of day is done,
And a sense of mystery
Steals across the earth and sky ;

Ere the thrush's even-song
Quite is ended, and the long
Shadows creeping o'er the plain
Blot the daylight out again ;

In the twilight lure of things
Come the brooding and the wings,
Comes the intuition clear
Of another world than here ;

Of another hour than this,
And a deeper blessedness :
In the Land where sets no sun
And the dark and light are one.

DRIFTWOOD

EYE to eye we met, and flashed
Heart to heart and soul to soul ;
We shall never meet again
From the North to Southern Pole.

We are driftwood on the ocean,
And the currents swirl and cross :
Had I never looked upon thee
I had never known thy loss.

I was drawn to thee, Belovèd,
From the dawning of the world,
But the flood of circumstance
All our lives asunder hurled.

Drifting on a trackless ocean
All alone in joy and pain—
In the Undiscovered Country
Shall we ever meet again ?

PHYSICAL ENERGY

EQUESTRIAN STATUE BY THE LATE G. F. WATTS, O.M.

" RIDER, to what Land bound ?
What wide expanse scanning with eager gaze ? "

" I ride to the Undiscovered Country,
Its bourn unknown,
Unbounded by the limit of the years :
The unpeopled tracts I people ;
Rolling veldt shall wave with corn,
And man diverse be one.

" Power is mine,
And power untamed I tame
And wrest it to my will.

" While the day dures I ride :
And when night falls upon me,
Others, beyond my westering,
Shall mount and follow.

" And the day cometh,
When Love shall conquer Death,
And Hope, beyond Hope, endure."

THE BROAD RIVER

WHERE does the Broad River flow ?

—Into the vast lone sea,

Out of the heart of the land

From the hills so free ;

Winding and wandering,

Pure and pearly with slime.

Where do the foul waters go ?

—Into the ocean betime :

Into the vast lone sea,

Into the clouds in the sky,

Into the rains that fall

Over the lands that are dry,

Into the rivers that run

Out of the hills so free—

Pure and foul are one

In the womb of Immensity.

AFTER READING THE LATEST BOOK ON
RADIO-ACTIVITY

"How much we ourselves are matter and how much ether is, in these days, a very moot question."—R. K. DUNCAN.

"And he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."—GENESIS iii. 24.

WE poets dreamed it long ago,
What the foot of Science slow
Now treads on surely. Atoms are
Not fixed apart and singular,
But indissolubly are blent
With all things in the firmament ;
And the subtlest ichor flows
Through the star that no man knows
Binding all the things that be
In unbroken unity ;
For the lonely elements
Have their kin and filaments,
And the task of man is done
Only when he finds the One.

There is force in a grain of sand
That may drive on sea and land ;

There is nothing but doth live,
And the stone is sensitive ;
But elusive as a shade
Is the Life of all things made,
Radium and radiobe
Everywhere around the globe,
And beyond the furthest rim
The flaming sword of the Cherubim.

THE BIRTH OF MAN

IN nebulae of æons old,
In flaming globes through darkness rolled,
Ere light and warmth had stirred the clay,
Wrapped in the central Heart he lay.

The Past is a prophetic page
To herald forth his pilgrimage,
And still on hieroglyphic scroll
His symbolled destinies unroll.

Urged on by Love and knit with Law,
The Future in the Past he saw,
Chaotic nebulae and flame
He guided, knowing whence he came :

Till Light and Warmth had decked the earth
For nobler manhood, fairer birth ;
Till the vast universal plan
Was linked unto the Love of Man.

LOVE TRIUMPHANT

NOT in the blood-red heart of earth,
Nor fixed in the unflinching skies,
Is Fate that sways us from our birth :
We are the Destinies.

We make or mar, create or slay,
And over all the gods we are ;
And howsoever we may stray
The heart beats with the star.

For in the unfathomed womb of all
Love and relentless Law are one ;
And earth is but a mocking ball
Whirled round a fleeting sun.

Not here nor there pervades our peace,
The sport of the illusive hours ;
Fate and o'er-weening Will shall cease :
Immortal Love is ours.

THE WATCHMAN

“WHAT of the night ? What of the night ?
Watchman on the lone watch-tower ?
What faint quiverings of light
Shoot, and hint the dawning-hour ? ”
Spake the Watchman then and there :
“ Shadows, shadows everywhere ! ”

Brake the dawn, and all the sky
Stretched blue-deep from rim to rim ;
But, wherever man passed by,
Shadows, shadows beckoned him :
In the night and in the day
Shadows never flee away.

Sojourners in Shadowland
Are we, as our fathers were ;
From the furthest strand to strand
Shadows, shadows everywhere !
—Pilgrim, wheresoe'er thou be,
Love is shining over thee.

FOR ENGLAND

¹ ENGLAND, I LOVE THEE !

ENGLAND, I love thee !
Who shall stand beside thee ?
Mother-land and home-land
With lure of sounding sea !
Over wide waters
Roam we wanderer-hearted,
But the roads, the white roads,
Call us home to thee.

England, I love thee !
Hedge-rows for the singing-birds !
Mountains hoar whose topmost cairn
Foot of Druid knew !
Land of elm and oak and pine
And the silvern birch, my Lady,
And the aspen quivering,
And the darksome yew !

Do my wild June roses
Blossom frailly elsewhere ?
Or the cowslips droop their bells
Just so slender ? Or the kine

¹ Set to music by Richard H. Walthew, and published by
Messrs. Stainer & Bell, Regent Street, W.

Dower peace to grassy meadows ?
Or the homesteads of the loved-ones
Bower hearts so stilly
As this land of mine ?

England, I love thee !
Who shall stand beside thee ?
Mother-land and home-land
With lure of sounding sea !
Over wide waters
All thy sons shall bless thee,
Green land and brown land
And land of liberty.

OLD ENGLAND

OLD England of the quiet ways,
Soft-spreading land of brown and green,
Old elms that shaded calmer days,
Old homes where love has been ;
Old bowered lanes and pathways lone
By dappled oats and rolling grain—
My England, beautiful my own,
Be quiet once again !

The fret of cities and the rack
Of grasping mart and fevered din !
Ye fools who know not what ye lack,
Nor joy in what ye win !
A motor whirling in the dust,
A cycle whizzing mile on mile !
Ye fools, who know not what ye lust,
Be still a little while !

Ah, might the peace of early days
Again on England's walks descend,
When firm she trod the steadfast ways
With sober thought to friend !

Not the illimitable veldt,
Not tariffs shall her power maintain :
Her thatched-roofed cottages have felt
The calm she must recall again.

THE HOMES OF ENGLAND

ARE anywhere such homes as here in England,
So embowered and still with shadowing trees ?
Such rolling lawns green as the emerald,
Such paths through such fair gardens leading ? Such
Charmed nooks of quietness ? Or by the wayside
Such cottage-homes to heal the wanderer ?

In such as these sons of the land are born,
And love her more than life, her honour precious
As to a lover his dear lady. I
Was born in England and was bred of her,
Within her homes and in her gardens fair,
Among her people of the hill and dale
And wood and stream and the adventurous sea—
Well-born—for have I not an English heart ?
And if I love her more than other lands,
Far more, it is because I am with her
Familiar, and know her wiles and ways
And many pleasantnesses ; and her story,
Which old-time bards have sung, to me is sweet
As were my mother's words. And I have roamed
In other lands which others love as dearly,
And loved my own the more by wandering

And by the pangs of exile : else not knowing
How meadows restful are with brooding kine,
How wildly fair hedge-rows, with briar and thorn
And many-herbed and mad with singing-birds,
How olden honour from forefathers calls
—And now I know the very heart of her,
I love her so, I will not wander more.

I KNOW A LAND

I KNOW a land of the lark and the pine,
Four league or more from London Town,
Where the kine brood on the soft uplands
That stretch to the rolling down.

Where the gorse burns gold, and a tender blue
Smiles, and the clouds droop, sober grey ;
Where the peewit dips with a wailing cry,
And the lark soars glad as day.

And oh for a sight of the green of Spring
Away and away from London Town !
With a warm mist over the soft uplands
That stretch to the rolling down !

MERRIE ENGLAND

Now May-buds break with blossom,
And all the wood-birds sing,
And oh to be in England
It is a blessed thing.

The boles of all the elm trees
Are green as they can be,
And oh in Merrie England
It is a sight to see :

To see the cherry blossom
With snow along the bough,
And oh to scent the wall-flowers
In cottage gardens now !

I know where droop the cowslips,
Where lilac spires are bold,
But oh to see laburnum
One flaming shower of gold !

It's oh for Merrie England,
And it's oh for the blue and a day,
For the coyest English maiden
To give her heart away.

ENGLAND

LET the German love his Fatherland
And the Frenchman love his own,
And I will love my own dear land,
And make her glories known :
This land above all other lands,
Linked with her Sisters three—
But east of Severn, south of Tweed,
Oh, that's the land for me !

For Nelson's Signal flashes
Broad over all her sky,
And for her hoary honour
Young Englishmen shall die :
For the salt of the sea is in them,
And the tang of English earth,
And they count not the price they owe
To the land that gave them birth.

Let the German love his Fatherland,
And the Frenchman love his own,
And I will love my own dear land,
And make her glories known :

This land above all other lands,
Linked with her Sisters three—
But east of Severn, south of Tweed,
Oh, that's the land for me !

CROSSING WESTMINSTER BRIDGE

DEDICATED TO THE HIGH COURT OF PARLIAMENT.

I

Sons and daughters,
Ye of old England,
Ye of the homeland,
Wending ye homeward,
Linger, oh linger !
Over the parapet
Wistfully gazing !—
By silent waters
Silverly gliding,
Beats the heart of our land,
Sleeps the tomb of our fathers.

II

The sickle-moon rises,
The lone star of even ;
Throbs in the sky ;
Lamplight silverly

Gleams on the waters ;
The barges slowly,
With red light and golden,
Steal through the archways,
Sombre and shadowy ;
High from the Clock Tower
Lustre-light streameth ;
The House is sitting
While Big Ben booms the hour.

III

Weary from labour
The toiler returneth
Over the archways,
Fast by the heart of our land,
Fast by the tomb of our fathers :
Clerk of the city,
Mender of roadways
With tin can and basket,
Agent and traveller,
Shopman and merchantman,
Teacher and clergyman,
Lawyer and railwayman,
Soldier and sailorman—
Dockers and dandies,

Jostle they all :
Furtive and slow
Creeps with saddest smile,
Brother, our sister of shame.

IV

Who shall drop over the bridge to-night,
Weary, how weary !
Fast by the heart of our land,
Fast by the tomb of our fathers ?

V

The coster plies
His trade by the kerbstone,
The newsboy shouts
The latest edition ;
Over the lower bridge
A long train thunders,
A line of flame,
Belching fire from the engines ;
The barges creep
Under the archways,

With red light and golden,
Or shadowy rest
On the mystic river :
Cabs rattle along,
Wagons lumber,
Harness-chains jingle ;
With shuffle of feet,
And whirl of motors,
And ring of bicycle bells,
And shout of drivers—
The light shines from the Clock Tower,
The House is sitting.

VI

Over the bridge
And along the Embankment
The lights guide our feet ;
Of old were ordained
The quiet moon and the stars ;
Barge-lights signal
Along the water-way ;
Big Ben beams
With his golden face the hour—
But why from the Clock Tower
Shines the beacon-light dazzling ?

VII

Not as the moon and stars
Ordained of old ;
Not as lamps
To guide our feet ;
Not to chronicle time,
Or signal on waterways ;
But unto men
The Herald
That Justice shall reign,
And Love be triumphant.

VIII

The Abbey sleeps—
Sleeps with her dead ;
With monarchs who scrolled out Old Eng-
land's story,
And poets the imperishable,
And statesmen who shaped her destinies,
And navigators who dared her seas,
And travellers who opened up her deserts,
And warriors who fought and bled,
And lawyers who framed her laws,
And merchants who sped her argosies,

And the ministers of pain,
The benefactors of men,
The revealers of nature,
The begetters of tragedy and mirth,
And the solemn priests.—
Still at eventide
Through wistful aisles
Stealeth the melody
Of days olden.

IX

Peacefully glides the river,
By hamlets sleeping,
By gentle meadows,
By barns and homesteads,
By thatch-roofed cottages,
By steeples and towers,
By city suburbs,
By factory chimneys,
By slums and wharves ;
From pure heights glideth
Till, city-polluted,
Lost in the vast pure sea.

X

The light shines from the Clock Tower,
The Abbey sleeps,
The river glides along in the silent night,
Stray feet patter
Along the causeways—
What dusky forms are those on the benches
 along the Embankment?—
When shall Justice reign
And Love be triumphant?

CLEOPATRA'S NEEDLE

OVER the river the dank mists lie,
Where Egypt's Needle points to the sky,
Looming like the phantom Shade
Of kings and dynasties decayed.

Ah, once in the City of the Sun
The sky was blue for every one,
Fifteen hundred years before
The White Christ trod on the Jordan shore.

Thothmes' and Ramses' sounding deeds
In hieroglyph the scholar reads ;
The grey gull curves with motionless wing
And there is an end to everything :

An end to love and an end to power,
To Cleopatra's softest hour—
Majestic arches the river span,
But there is an end to the pride of man.

Syênê granite shall crumble away,
And whirl with the dust of yesterday—
But in the soul of man may be
A calm not of time but eternity.

THE TEMPLE GARDENS

By trysting haunt of cairn or dell
The soul a wonted calm may keep :
But there's a hush no tongue can tell
In London, where the Templars sleep.

Where Johnson talked, and Goldsmith strayed,
And through the stones the platanes grow,
Where Norman Round and cloistered shade
Whisper of long and long ago :

Of Lion-Heart and Saladin,
Of Acre and of Ascalon—
From Whitefriars to the Strand the din
And whirl of traffic hurry on.

Within these ancient-timbered walls
A stillness and a peace abide,
And lawns are green as by the Halls
Where Cam and Isis softly glide.

Peace, peace awhile ! To perilous Quests
The clamouring Present bids us—On !
And where the turmoil never rests
Stand Acre and grim Ascalon.

WATERLOO BRIDGE

Now lifts the light mist of the morn,
The rumbling traffic rolls,
The bridge across the waterway
Is thronged with travelling souls.

Solemn the massive Dome of Wren
Looms o'er the wharves and ways,
Calm with the strength of Englishmen
Of the heroic days.

And yonder, where the river bends
Grey in the misty blur,
Sombre and pinnacled arise
The Towers of Westminster.

A girl dropped from the Bridge last night,
An old man tattered lies
Stretched on the stone ; unheeding pass
The inhuman destinies :

The restless thralls of Mammon pass
With eyes that may not scan
The rounded glory of the Dome,
The martyrdom of man.

The traffic rumbles loud and long,
All gladsome breaks the day :
The mists that shroud the soul of man—
When will they lift away ?

STRAND-ON-THE-GREEN

OLD barges that have done their day
Line all along the river-way,
Old houses with their memories,
Old willow-stumps and tall elm-trees ;
Wistaria and jessamine
And ivy on the old walls twine,
And old salts wearied end their days
A-looking on the water-ways.

On summer eves you yet may see
The crane fly home laboriously ;
The oast-house where the malt was dried
For many a turning of the tide,
Warm-tiled and turreted, wind-free ;
Old England as she used to be—
The wicket-gate, the open door,
The homely threshold whitened o'er,
The trellised porch, the jutting bay,
The bench to while the hours away :
The cobbler at his window set
Is looking o'er the rushes yet.

Strand-on-the-*Green* thou art no more,
For back of thee there is the roar

Of London, and thy green is gone,
A thousand houses stand upon :
Yet whoso treads thy pavement may
Cast London half a league away,
And cottage-homes and gardens fair
Come stumbling over unaware,
Where old wives' tales at eve are told
That with the telling grow not old,
And lovers of old days may yet
Time's vandal footsteps half forget.

ON SEEING CROMWELL'S STATUE
OUTSIDE WESTMINSTER

THIS man with sword and Bible shook the world,
And bade the Rump and all its crew "Begone!"
And straight they went, and not a dog barked: for
The nation loathed their sitting. Days so like
To ours! But the man fails us. And the Book
Shakes not the soul with thunder as of yore,
Nor rives like lightning from the lips of men.
And that high Source, whence every Bible drew
Truth's waters—and shall draw them—few thirst for
And many deem the sullied waters fresh,
Having forgotten. But the hour shall come,
And, with the hour, the man and the remembrance.

AUGUST, 1905

FRONTING WESTMINSTER

'GAINST the moored barges lightly lap
The waters from some passing swell
Of steamer with white wake ;
Over the benches gently droop
The platane leaves with shade.

The Abbey bell tolls softly :
While over the bridge and through the archways
The moving panorama flows
Shadowy, and the barge
Lowers its tall red sail.

Oh glad is light on the waters !
How it shimmers ! How it sparkles !
And oh how blue the sky,
And soft the summer clouds !
And labour
Under the sun how joyous !

But as I tread
The stone-way by the river,
By the Houses of Westminster,
With the twin towers of the Abbey peering
white above them ;

Or lean over the parapet
On the dappled waters watching the silvery-
grey light ;
Shattered hulks of men loom by,
And women bedraggled—
And on the benches sleeping
Awful forms I see.

THE LAST PARADE

(THE PASSING OF THE LATE DUKE OF CAMBRIDGE.)

I

THE charger is riderless,
Saddled and prancing :
The rider is low.

II

Minute-guns boom
And thunder and shudder,
While draped on a limber,
A coffin passes
Slow through the city
To martial music ;
Muffled the drums
And craped all over ;
And on the coffin
A plumed hat and bâton
And draped flag of Britain.

III

In St. Faith's Chapel,
Bare and olden,
Through the night stillness
Grenadiers guarded
Their old Commander.

IV

To the High Altar
In the hushed Abbey they bore him,
Mid tombs of the mighty ;
Gleamed on crimson cushion
In mellowed sunlight
A coronet golden.

V

There were gathered
King and warriors,
Ambassadors, Ministers,
With jewelled Orders,
Richly apparelled ;
Veteran Chiefs

To bear the pall ;
Then, from trombone and trumpet,
The wail of Purcell,
The burst of the organ,
The solemn words for the dead,
The minute-bell slow tolling ;
And from organ and trumpets and drums
And the voice of the great congregation
The soldiers' hymn
Resounding strong and triumphant.

VI

Slow through the city
A coffin passes
With martial pomp
And tread of columns
And the Dead March thrilling strains
Flash in the sunlight
Cuirass and helmet ;
Gay plumes wave
And pennons on lances craped ;
And, behind the coffin,
A riderless charger
Follows his master
Sped on his last parade.

THE OLD MOTHER

THE COLONIES SPEAK

WE are turning our faces to the old Mother-Land,
To the Home-Land that lures with the call of the
sea ;
From the northernmost snows to the southernmost
strand,
From backwood and kopje and bush and prairie ;
We have felled for our clearings the forests, the sky
Smiles over our tillage and wild trodden ways :
All Hail, Ancient Mother ! Let us look eye to eye !
We are doers of deeds at the dawning of days.

We are turning our faces to the old Mother-Land,
We have wandered and wandered long leagues on
the sea ;
We loved her and left her, and at our command
The desolate places were homes for the free :
For her spirit went with us, her old liberties,
Her laws and her language, her deep sense of home,
And we tell to our children the old memories,
And they love the Old Mother wherever they roam.

We are turning our faces to the old Mother-Land,
We are children once more, and we lie on her knee !
Old Mother ! She loved us, but thus was she planned,
She nourished within us the lure of the sea :
“ Ye are men, ye are grown, and the ocean-paths
call,
The ways that are trackless, the lands that are
bare ! ”
So we fared, for we loved her, beyond her sea-wall,
And we left the Old Mother, her burden to share.

We are turning our faces to the old Mother-Land,
She is waiting and watching far over the sea ;
As clear are her eyes as of old when she scanned
On the rim the far dawn of her high destiny :
“ My sons and my daughters, my hearths and my halls,
My gates and my doors, they are wide to the
day ;
My counsels are yours, would ye heed to their calls,
I will list to your tales of the Perilous Way.”

THE SEASONS

THE SPRING!

A TREMOR in the air, a hush,
Expectancy of bud and wing,
A brooding, and a secret stir
Of life in everything.

Now willows tinge a tender green
While other trees are bare,
The sunny side of hedge and tree
Is budding everywhere.

The buds are resinous, the twigs
Are stiff with sap against the sky,
The rooks upon the tall elms know
The winter-time is by.

The time of singing birds is come,
Of mating and of bourgeoning,
And oh for the lover and his lass—
The Spring! The Spring! The Spring!

THE POTTER

I WATCHED a potter at his wheel
Shaping dull clay to form and worth :
I saw as in a parable
The glory of the earth.

Now all the wonder of the year
Breaks at the delicate touch of Spring
Who with her fingers sensitive
Forms lovely everything.

Spring passes with the daffodil,
And Summer with the wild wild rose,
And mellow Autumn's fruitage yields
Her vintage to the snows :

While, hidden in the desolate earth,
Fell Winter's cerements conceal
Spring at the central Heart, who turns
Blossomings on her wheel.

THE BLOSSOMING YEAR

BLUE-BELLS azure the wood,
And the gorse is gold ;
The may is drowsy-white,
And the chestnut plumes are bold ;
O merry merry May
And light-heart June !
But the blue of the woodland fades,
And proud plumes trail so soon.

All the glory of life
Is a summer day ;
The thrush's evensong
In the twilight dies away :
The song the poet sings
In the blossoming year
Is ended, ah so soon !
And the world is too busy to hear.

WHEN THE CHESTNUTS BLOOM

COME, when the chestnuts bloom,
Or earlier when the cherry snows !
But come in the heart of June
With the wild wild rose !

Come in the green of Spring
Ere the wanton cuckoo's note is heard,
In the hour of the daffodil
And the nesting bird !

But come when the chestnuts bloom
And drowsing honey-bees hum in the air !
Till the throb of the heart of June
Come away, my fair !

Come with the wild wild rose
Till the corn burns gold to the sunlit day
From the Spring to the crown of the year,
My fair one, come away !

WILD ROSE

LET the wild rose live its life,
For, ah, it fades so soon !
And on the lap of this green earth
It is not always June.

It is not always blue o' the sky
Nor always blue o' the sea :
Let the wild rose live its life
Wherever it may be !

Let the petals crimson-flushed
Fall another day !
Let it feel the throb of June
In its wild sweet way !

Every lad and every lass
Underneath the blue,
From the heart of this good earth
Joy is calling you.

SIC TRANSIT

LIKE the wild rose on the hedge-row
Like the rainbow i' the rain,
Is all that the heart desireth
Of life that is woven with pain.

June is away with the roses,
The shower is over and gone,
The bow on the black cloud breaketh
Leaving the cloud alone.

Like a warm mist over the river
On summer eves that die,
Like the elms that brood in the shadows
That over the waters lie,

Is all that the heart desireth
Of life shot through with pain
—Like the wild rose on the hedge-row,
Like the rainbow i' the rain.

STILL WATERS

IN Summer, when the sun is low,
By the still water-ways I go ;
And, oh, the drip of oars is sweet
After the traffic of the street !

I glide by banks that wind and wind,
With meadow-grass and bushes lined ;
In all the world there seems to be
Nothing but water, sky, and me,

And far-off shadowy trees that brood,
Drowsy in twilight solitude.
How wonderful the water is !
The blue how deep with mysteries !

On me the calm of all descends ;
By willow-ways the water bends ;
A bat flits to and fro ; and I
Float in the dusk the rushes by.

AUTUMN

Now Autumn with the yellow leaf
And nipping time is here,
The stubble barren of the sheaf
Dies in the waning year.

It reddens down the hawthorn way,
And scarlet is the briar,
But, ah, the roses and the may
I' the Land o' Heart's Desire !

While, with the burden of the years
Old faiths flush out and die,
And with unutterable fears
Hope's chilly furrows lie.

The stalwart sowers forth they go
With measured stride and swing,
But, ah, what racking winds shall blow
Ere bourgeoneth the Spring !

JACK FROST

A BITE of frost in the morning air,
The slant sun dazzling everywhere,
The grass-blades bearded white with rime—
Oh keen of heart is the young winter-time !

A lad's hoop rings on the road to school,
His cheeks ablaze like the logs of Yule ;
The beech-nuts shiver and patter down,
And the leaves, the leaves are yellow and brown.

And nipped is the ripening blackberry
When lusty Jack Frost goes to battle with glee
With the old Lord Sun in the white-blue sky,
And blustering-bold is his battle-cry.

There's a time for Summer, a time for Spring,
A time for Autumn a-mellowing,
A time for Youth, and a time for Age,
And a time for turning the very last page.

But glad is the frosty light of day,
And you'd best blow your nails, lad, while you may ;
For Summer or Winter, east or west,
The moment that passes not is best.

MIST-BOUND

BROWN leaves of Summer gone,
Ye rustle as I tread,
And white mists veil the hills
Like shrouds above the dead.

No song of bird on bough,
No break of boundless blue,
Only the mist-bound earth,
Brown leaves, for me and you !

Only the stain of time
For the soul that will not know
Limit or bond or change
Whereunto all things go :

Till on this veiled earth
Love all her radiance pour,
And bourn and fate and death
Vanish for evermore.

TREES

THE trees are beautiful in spring with the fresh green
of the year,
And pleasant is the chestnut shade when the summer
noon is here,
But when autumn glories robe the woods and the
creeper on the wall,
Oh, then I think the human folk they love trees most
of all.

But there are those who walk alone in winter solitudes,
Who love the bark-stripped, mottled plane when not
a leaf obtrudes,
Who love the starkest soul of things and the truth as
it is most bare,
And gnarled oaks, naked against the wind, storm-
wrested everywhere.

FOG

THE trees in the mist are weird and bare
A nip of winter is in the air ;
The birds have never a song to sing,
And sad is the heart of everything.

The hedges are wet as they can be,
And shiver with rain-drops icily ;
The sun might never be in the sky
When over the land the grey mists lie.

But if the sun were never at all
I should not see the grey mists fall,
I should not see the ploughman stride,
Looming over the dark hedge side.

And on the pathway, sombre and slow,
Shadows of men they come and go
Out of the shrouded land afar,
Pilgriming where no grey mists are :

Where the sun and the morning star and moon
With the merriest earth are ever in tune ;
Where for birds and for corn it is always spring,
And glad is the heart of everything.

POEMS CHIEFLY LYRICAL

B.B.

G

TWILIGHT ON THE CURRAGH

ROSY-TINTED day
On the curragh dies :
One lone curlew moans
Through the skies.

Rushy pools are still :
All of shadow made,
Seaward curragh lands
Stretch and fade.

Mist and cloud and sky,
Bush and darksome mere,
In the twilight grey
Disappear.

One lone curlew moans
Over land and sea :
Soon he too shall rest,
Night, with thee.

Rosy-tinted day
On the curragh dies :
Over sea and hill
Shadow lies.

THE WIND IN THE TREES

THE wind is in the trees to-day,
The branching elms are all at play ;
The oak, the ash, and the bold beech-tree,
They stretch their arms to the wind with glee.

For they love the music of the storm,
When the surging fugues roll uniform,
As the waves love the rhythmic monotone
Of the wind on the sea-shore all alone.

The silvern birch and the poplar slim,
The dark-crowned pine with his far-flung limb,
The chestnut, the aspen, the willow, the plane,
Oh, they are glad in the wind again !

The rooks and the starlings, all together,
Flurry and whirl in the windy weather ;
While over the tree-tops in the sky
The fleet clouds scatter and swirl and fly.

Where do they come from and where do they go,
And where, oh, where, does the wild wind blow ?
Out of the softest breeze that played
In the aspen are the whirlwinds made :

Out of the faintest skein of cloud
Are the black murk and the thunders loud—
But what care the trees as they swing and they sway,
For oh, they are glad in the wind to-day !

THE IMMORTAL PART

HER eyes like the blue speedwell smile,
Soft to the blue of day,
Yet, though earth's loveliness beguile,
Their look is far away.

For sunlit isles without a shade,
And love without a tear,
Is she, my little wistful maid,
My blue-eyed flower so dear.

And could I love as I would do,
She should not ever die,
For not a cloud should cross the blue
Of still deeps in her eye.

Ah, more to me than life and death,
And precious things that fade,
The immortal part that beckoneth
Me and my blue-eyed maid !

THE LORD OF EVERYTHING

My little wife, she does not know
Why things are ever so and so :
But she is wise and she is good
And she is gentle womanhood.

For she by intuition reads
A deeper lore than all the creeds,
And all the blue of all the skies
Is not so tender as her eyes.

Her every motion is of grace,
And home to me is holy place,
Yet could I often weep to see
How wistfully she looks on me.

She little recks of books or art,
For she of Nature is a part :
And she and all about her sing—
Love is the Lord of everything.

THE ROSE ETERNAL

LITTLE wife, I would that thou
Hadst no care upon thy brow,
Just a laughing winsome maid—
Ah, why will the wild rose fade ?

Yet remembering, loving yet,
With thy dark-lashed eyes dew-wet,
For the new love and the old
Thou art brave and thou art bold.

Little wife, thy love shall stay
Round about me every day,
And my love to thee shall bring
All the blossomings of Spring.

Little sweetheart, fortune-barred,
Frail, so frail, for lot so hard !
In the heart there fall no snows,
Blooms eternally my rose.

WILD ROSE

I LOVED a wayside blossom,
I loved it oh so dear,
As wild it bloomed and careless
Under the heavens clear ;

All in a sweet-breathed country
Under the blue of the sky :
I took it home to cherish,
I took it home to die.

It paled and drooped and withered,
And no more looked at me :
It left its life behind it
Upon a briar tree.

The sun had flushed and kissed it,
And all my skies were grey :
I would I had not seen it
Upon a summer day.

THE EVERLASTING HILLS

I AM a child of the hills and the sky,
But dwell in the peopled plains :
My native longings are mountain-high,
Far from the hedges and lanes.

The hedges and lanes are pleasant and fair
Where the nestling homesteads brood :
Homelier to me is the mountain air
And the soul in its solitude.

A REFORMER

A LOVER of the old-world mellowed things
And ruddy flush of years,
But fated to the new-world venturings
And travailings and fears :

Who liefer, in that olden world withdrawn,
Had felt the sunset glow,
Than known, ere yet the twilight of the dawn,
This new world's heart of woe.

TO WILLIAM WATSON

HIGH on the mountains by the heather bloom,
Or boulders naked to the unflinching sky,
Or stilly tarn's unruffled secrecy,
The soul for its vast solitudes has room ;
The knell of incommunicable doom
Is heard there only—mighty empires die,
While, on the plains, the heedless passer-by
Hears not, nor bodes the impenetrable gloom.

O singer of the mountain and the height
Descend, and plunge thy plummet in the deep
Of hearts where loves unutterable sleep
And unextinguished hates ! Then thou shalt tell
The bodings, and our ears shall harken well.
—Oh, save us from the overwhelming night !

ETERNITY

WE dream of Eldorados far
And life that is to be :
Poor fools, from morn till even-star
We let the Moment flee.

We sigh for Eden long ago
And Heaven that is not yet :
Poor fools, from morn till even-glow
The Present we forget.

DREAMS

THE things I would have done !
The things I dreamed to do !
But now the course is run,
And none of the dreams are true.

None of the dreams, not one !
And yet they called so clear :
The things that I had done
Made me too sad to hear.

IRONSIDES

THERE were Ironsides in the olden days
When the Old Book was young,
And its Horeb thunders shook the soul
In the homely Saxon tongue ;
They gave their treasure and their blood
For the truth that maketh free :
But that was in the olden days
Or ever we came to be.

There were Ironsides in the olden days,
But the Old Book is old,
For bat-eyed priests have blotted out
The spell of its morning-gold :
And the Horeb thunders are heard no more
Of the truth that maketh free,
As once in the old heroic days
Or ever we came to be.

AT THE FORGE

THE lightning comes before the light
In Thor's sledge-hammer way,
And Chaos must be forged to Right
Ere dawns the brighter day.

Thus Beauty's softest whisperings
Are beaten out of Wrong :
At every blow the anvil rings
With passion of the strong.

HOME

A COTTAGE under my own woodside,
And kine upon the meadow grass,
Were heaven enough for a lad like me,
And heaven enough for my light-heart lass.

But the moan of the wild world came my way,
The pitiless cry of the oppressed:
And I left the kine on the green upland,
And under the woodside my haven of rest.

I HAD A LOVER

I HAD a lover : he is dead !
I had a lover long ago !
The thrush at even sings, and I
Sing in the after-glow.

Last song of day ! The tall elms brood
Vaguely above the mowing grass,
And with the sombring shadows soon
Our twilight song will pass.

Green were the heart-leaves of the lime,
And golden with the sun-lit glow.
I had a lover : he is dead !
I had a lover long ago.

PARTING

O PITY, pity, love not so !
Farewell ! Farewell !
Though our hearts break, I yet must go !
Farewell !

Stand cold and passionless, and steel
Thy heart with fate !
And let us seem to cease to feel !
Too late !

Ah, cling not, cling not ! Must I tear
Those arms apart !
Ah, sob not, sob not to despair !
My heart !

Forget me ! Would I could forget !
Thy memory
Will haunt me. Nor shall dull regret
Spare thee.

AFTER SCHOOL

WHEN all the lessons are ended
And the books are put away,
I shall be going home, lads,
For a long holiday.

I am weary-worn of striving ;
I have read life's darkest page ;
And the sum of all man's wisdom
Is this, from age to age :

'Mid the searching out and sorrowing,
And the toiling and the strife,
When all the lessons are ended,
Love is the wage of life.

When the twilight shadows lengthen,
Toward even still and cool,
Sweet Mother, come and welcome
Your little lad from school.

ON SALE!

IN open market-place I stood
And showed my wares for men to buy,
Soul-stuffs for utter hardihood—
They heedless passed me by.

Some trafficked with the brood of lies,
And some had human souls to sell:
The people gazed with lustful eyes
Upon the wares of hell.

Haply some wistful lad forlorn,
Unspotted of the sullied mart,
Would buy my songs untimely born,
And I was glad at heart.

THE VOICE OF ONE

I MADE me a Song of Words,
And it rang out brave and true ;
In lilt and fibre and fashioning
The soul of a man shone through.

But none gave heed on the mart,
None heard on the silent plain,
And mine was the boding voice of one
Who cried in the desert again.

I made me a Song of Deeds,
And no man bruited it wide,
But safe in the desolate cold earth
The hopes of the harvest hide.

And the notes of the song I sang
Were heard on the mart and plain ;
For they were at one with the Song of Life
That throbs in heart and brain.

THE PLOUGHERS

THEY ploughed deep furrows in my soul
And scars of ancient wrong :
Yet purposeful to make me whole
The kindly Powers were strong.

And in the waning of the year
They harrowed me with pain :
I nurtured seedlings to the ear
And I was whole again.

TO MR. GEORGE CADBURY

WHILE others with their gold crushed Love and Beauty,
Square-jawed, with ruthless will,
You, pitying men, held it to be your duty
To raise them still.

Fair cottage-homes, a garden-land of flowers,
And a clean Press, the Guardian of the Age,
More than our thanks and the rich crown of hours
—These are your wage.

IN MEMORIAM

IF any would remember me at all
When my short day is done,
Two things I loved may, haply, still recall
Me and the sun.

The far-flung pine that overlooks the plain,
Dark-crowned, and challenging
The winds, the clouds, the thunders, and the rain
Where no birds sing.

The silvern birch, the Lady, dainty-fair,
Of hedge-row and of glade,
Dapple and glint astraying in her hair
For dalliance made.

If any, haply, would not quite forget
That I was wont to be:
The gaunt pine holds my spirit, the birch yet
The human heart of me.

THINGS BEFORE WORDS

THE great words never were writ,
The great songs never were sung :
They that were greatest did their deed
 Without the pen or tongue.

The word from a heart of flame
Blazed and flickered and died ;
The moving song the minstrel sang
 Passed with the time and tide.

But the words that never were writ,
And the songs that never were sung,
In the silent hearts of heroes wrought
 Without the pen or tongue.

Instead of the word—a deed,
Instead of the song—a man :
The things that are greatest were fashioned thus
 Since the world began.

“ Life is a Bridge : pass over it, but build not
houses upon it.”— *Old Saying.*



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